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ABSTRACT

This booklet describes the Career in Teaching (CIT) Program, a collaborative effort between the Rochester City School District and the Rochester Teachers Association to revitalize instruction by creating a true professional for teachers. Central to the reform movement, CIT aims to improve student attainment by setting new expectations for teachers' roles in school organization, decentralizing district operations, and creating school communities accountable for change. The plan establishes four career levels: intern, resident, professional, and lead teacher. It believes that effective teaching: connects the student's world and content, celebrates the learning process, incorporates knowledge of human development, and offers a safe learning environment. CIT is directed by a 12-member panel with various responsibilities. This booklet provides information on: who qualifies to be an intern in the program; what kinds of lead teacher mentors there are; whether participation in the CIT program is optional; the intent of an internship; what types of support and assistance mentors provide; professional expectations for interns; and what happens at the end of an internship. (SM)

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Career In Teaching

HIGHLIGHTS

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Career in Teaching *262-8518*

CIT HIGHLIGHTS

The Career in Teaching (CIT) Program is a collaborative effort between the Rochester City School District and the Rochester Teachers Association to revitalize instruction by creating a true profession for teachers. Central to Rochester's reform movement, CIT aims at improving student attainment by setting new expectations for teachers' roles in school organization and development decentralizing district operations, and creating school communities accountable for change. Program implementation is guided by the Career in Teaching Plan Agreement, which was negotiated in the spring of 1988.

THE INTENT OF THE CAREER IN TEACHING PROGRAM IS TO IMPROVE STUDENT OUTCOMES BY:

- **Developing and maintaining the highest quality of teaching .**
- **Providing teachers with career options that do not require them to leave teaching to assume additional responsibilities and leadership roles.**

THE PLAN ESTABLISHES FOUR CAREER LEVELS:

INTERN: Teachers who are new to the profession or to the subjects they are hired to teach. Interns may receive the assistance of a Lead Teacher/Mentor during their first year in the district.

RESIDENT: Teachers who have successfully completed their internship but are not both permanently certified and tenured.

PROFESSIONAL: Teachers who are both permanently certified and tenured.

LEAD TEACHER: Professional-level teachers who are selected through an open competitive process for specific instructional and professional leadership roles (i.e., mentor) involving additional time and responsibility as well as additional knowledge and skills.

Lead teacher positions are designed to improve public education in Rochester by providing exemplary teachers with the opportunity to:

- ***Share their knowledge and expertise.***
- ***Participate actively in instructional decision-making.***
- ***Inspire excellence in the profession.***
- ***Provide leadership instructional & professional***

CIT PROMOTES PROFESSIONAL EXPECTATIONS:

Fundamental to the Career in Teaching Plan is the concept of extended expectations for all professional staff. The extended expectations for teachers begin with four belief statements about what teaching and learning should be and about what teaching and learning must become if schools are to change to respond better to student needs. These four belief statements aim at improved student attainment and apply to all career levels and all professionals. The four statements are summarized below:

> ***Effective teaching connects the student's world and content.*** *Students are the focal point of the instructional process; our energy is channeled toward engaging the student and supporting the transformation toward community and global connection*
>
> ***Effective teaching celebrates the learning process.*** *Students and teachers are engaged in active learning and share the accountability for and pride of accomplishment. Instruction is energetic, enthusiastic and challenging teacher and student.*
>
> ***Effective teaching incorporates knowledge of human development.*** *Teachers, with the school community, analyze student needs and adjust instruction as a result of continuing collegial dialogue and as a result of reflection on student work and performance.*
>
> ***Effective teaching offers a safe learning environment.*** *Teachers and students work together to create an atmosphere conducive to learning—characterized by mutual respect, fostering self-esteem and a sense of a shared mission.*

The expectations for teachers also incorporate the following five areas of professional development, interaction and involvement: the continuum of professional development and collegial interaction; professional involvement beyond the classroom; home involvement; community relationships; and promoting and enhancing the status of the profession. These areas of professional emphasis for district teachers serve as points of departure for discussions about what schools, teaching and learning should be as we move forward. At the outset, professional staff needs to acknowledge and support a concept of collegiality that is new to our schools.

THE CIT PROGRAM IS DIRECTED BY A 12 MEMBER PANEL:

- Six members are appointed by the Superintendent of Schools and six members are appointed by the Rochester Teachers Association.
- The Superintendent of Schools and the President of the RTA are *ex officio* members.
- The chair rotates annually between the teachers and the administrators.

CIT PANEL RESPONSIBILITIES INCLUDE:

- Developing and making program and policy recommendations concerning implementation of the CIT Plan to the Superintendent and the RTA President.
- Implementing policy related to the CIT Program
- Delineating roles, responsibilities, expectations and success measures for each of the four career levels.
- Monitoring teacher career development and advancement, including recommending the continuation or termination of intern teachers, and monitoring the tenure process.
- Developing and recommending to the Superintendent and RTA President a performance appraisal system for professional-level teachers that provides for peer review and focuses on promoting developmental and professional growth.
- Soliciting, screening and implementing proposals for lead teacher positions.

- Developing lead teacher job descriptions; determining compensation for each lead teacher position; selecting lead teachers; and directing and monitoring the supervision and evaluation of each lead teacher position.
- Recommending policy and practice improvement related to systemic issues affecting the Career in Teaching Plan
- Working with appropriate district staff to identify financial support for lead teacher positions, CIT Panel operations, intervention, and additional internships.
- Working with appropriate district staff to establish methods of monitoring and documenting the effectiveness of the CIT Plan, based on improvements in student performance.

Some Key Questions:

WHO QUALIFIES TO BE AN INTERN IN THE CAREER IN TEACHING PROGRAM?

According to the negotiated Career In Teaching Plan (May 1988): "Newly employed teachers with less than one year full-time teaching experience in their certification area in New York State shall be considered Intern Teachers. Intern Teachers may be assigned a CIT Program Mentor for their first year with the District." Other, more experienced, newly employed teachers may also be considered for internships. Full time contractual substitutes as well as Interns with probationary contracts may be included.

WHAT KINDS OF LEAD TEACHER MENTORS ARE THERE?

- Traditional (Released) Mentor – released up to half-time to serve four interns
- School-based Mentor – per diem release to serve one intern
- Special Area Mentor – per diem release to serve one intern in areas such as psychology, library media, social work, school counseling, audiology and speech/language pathology.

IS PARTICIPATION IN THE CIT PROGRAM OPTIONAL?

All full-time teachers active with the district must participate in the Career in Teaching Program. Newly hired teachers will be assigned to an internship or residency as a condition of hiring. Your career development level status will be included in your Personnel file.

WHAT IS THE INTENT OF AN INTERNSHIP?

Establishing a corps of the highest caliber teachers is a shared goal of the RCSD and RTA. Incorporating internship as a career development level in the Career in Teaching Program reflects the district's and union's belief that teachers in their first year with the district should be given the best possible opportunities for professional development and success. Internships are designed to:

a) *Inspire individual and professional excellence.*
b) *Induct newly hired teachers into the district, the profession and the community.*
c) *Communicate to interns the district's mission and values.*
d) *Assist interns in developing and refining their pedagogical skills and in handling their other responsibilities.*
e) *Help interns to develop the skills necessary to work effectively in an urban environment.*
f) *Encourage interns to develop collegial relationships.*

WHAT SUPPORT AND ASSISTANCE CAN I EXPECT FROM MY MENTOR?

Mentor-intern interaction is controlled by the relationship that develops between individuals. In general, the mentor is to provide advice, help secure materials, ease the intern's transition into the district, share information about all aspects of professional development, and guide the intern's induction into the teaching ranks. The mentor's role is one of an "enabler" or facilitator, and should enrich the experience of an intern teacher.

WHAT ARE THE PROFESSIONAL EXPECTATIONS FOR INTERNS?

Fundamental to the Career in Teaching Plan and other reform initiatives is the concept of extended expectations for all professional staff. In 1988, a group of teachers and administrators developed the ***Professional Expectations for Teachers.*** These extended expectations began with four belief statements about what teaching and learning should be, and about what teaching and learning must become if schools are to change to respond to student needs. The expectations for teachers also incorporated the following five areas of professional development, interaction and involvement:

a) *The continuum of professional development and collegial interaction*
b) *Professional involvement beyond the classroom*
c) *Home involvement*
d) *Community relationships*
e) *Promoting and enhancing the status of the profession*

WHAT HAPPENS AT THE END OF AN INTERNSHIP?

Internship is a "gatekeeping" mechanism for the profession and for the district. Mentors have the dual responsibility for:

1) Assisting interns to develop their skills to the greatest extent possible.
2) Judging whether an intern should continue to be employed by the district.

Toward the end of the internship, the CIT Panel is responsible for making recommendations regarding an intern's future with the district.